

Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. In Maryland, 22,500 people are here from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti. The largest number is from El Salvador. Our TPS population in Maryland exceeds the DACA population. My own State's recipients contributed \$1.2 billion to the gross domestic product of my State, so this is a major part of the Maryland economy.

This is a very similar situation to the Dreamers. They get a 6- to 18-month extension. They have been here for decades because the underlying conditions in the countries from which they came still exist. I have been to Central America. I can tell you that it is not safe for people to return to those gang communities. They have the same situation—they know no other country but America. If they are required to go back to the country in which they were born, it will tear families apart. We need to act. We need to act in order to protect this group of citizens.

I want to acknowledge legislation that was introduced. I join my colleagues, Senators VAN HOLLEN, FEINSTEIN, and others, who will provide a legislative fix, S. 2144, the SECURE Act. I am pleased that the outline of the Durbin-Graham compromise immigration legislation includes relief for TPS recipients. The legislation will make changes to the diversity visa lottery program and reallocate half of the annual visas to recipients of TPS. That would amount to about 27,000 visas annually.

Under the draft, TPS recipients would maintain legal status and work authorization while awaiting visas. This would give TPS recipients protection from deportation, work authorizations, green cards, and ultimately a pathway to citizenship. After the TPS backlog is cleared—which could take roughly a decade to do, given the 300,000-plus recipients of TPS in the United States today—the annual visas would be allocated to nationals of priority countries.

In the past few months, the Department of Homeland Security has placed termination dates on TPS for those from El Salvador and Haiti and has extended the deadline for a decision on Honduras. These individuals are at risk. We need to act.

Maryland has a large number of El Salvadorans. I am gravely concerned about what will happen to these individuals—many mixed-nationality families who have been part of American communities for so long. For nearly a decade, El Salvador has consistently suffered per capita murder rates that have been among the worst in the world. In 2016, the people of El Salvador were victims of over 5,200 homicides—an alarming rate of more than 80 per 100,000 and the highest globally. El Salvador has limited capacity to absorb the nearly 200,000 individuals who could be subjected to immediate deportation. We welcomed these individuals to America to save them from danger.

As another example, although Haiti has made important strides toward re-

construction, its capacity to effectively manage repatriation efforts has faced substantial setbacks, including the continuing cholera epidemic and devastating hurricane in late 2016. Additionally, conditions in Haiti were further complicated by two category 5 hurricanes—Irma and Maria, which struck in September. These recent developments exacerbate already fragile conditions in Haiti.

As the Department of Homeland Security's own internal memorandum from April 2017 outlined, an estimated 30 percent of the population—approximately 3.2 million people—suffer from food insecurity, and 40 percent of the population lacks access to fundamental health and nutrition services.

In other words, it is not safe for those individuals to go back to Haiti. They have been here. This is their home. They want to make this their home, and we should give them that opportunity.

Let me conclude by again quoting Becky, one of the Dreamers I met at the University of Maryland, College Park. She said that the best present she ever got was on her 13th birthday when President Obama executed the Executive order that gave her legal status and hope here in America.

Well, we can give her an even better present right now. We can give her the present of Congress acting to provide protection for the Dreamers and for those on TPS so they don't have to worry again and they know they have a home here in America.

I urge my colleagues to pass legislation that will protect the Dreamers and TPS.

Mr. President, I certainly hope we will do the minimum that the Congress of the United States can get done, and that is to pass a budget before the deadline of tomorrow evening.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). The Senator from Hawaii.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, Republicans control every level of the Federal Government. They hold majorities in the House and the Senate. They have the Presidency. Yet the very people—the Republicans—who set the agenda in Washington and have majorities in both the House and the Senate are desperately trying to convince the American people that a government shutdown should be blamed on anyone else but them. Give me a break.

Nobody wants a shutdown except, maybe, the President, who seems to relish a government shutdown as a way of “shaking things up,” regardless of who gets hurt. Members of Congress should know better, and Republicans should get down to business and negotiate with Democrats in good faith.

Republicans in the House and Senate have brought us to the brink of a shutdown because they are terrified of the ideological extremists in their own

party who reject even the most reasonable bipartisan compromises. They are terrified of a mercurial President, who changes his mind on a whim, who explodes at even the most minor slights, and who has repeatedly said that maybe we need a good government shutdown so he can get his vanity wall. Donald Trump and the Republicans will be held responsible for any government shutdown. They have created this situation, and the American people will hold them accountable.

Democrats have been open and transparent about the things we are fighting for. We are fighting to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP, so 9 million kids across the country can continue to access the life-saving healthcare they need. We are fighting to restore funding to community health centers that serve millions of underserved Americans in rural communities, whether they live in Kansas, Ohio, or any of the other States Trump won. We are fighting to protect the Dreamers who could be deported to countries they know little of because the President unnecessarily and cruelly ended the DACA Program. We are also fighting for parity in funding for defense and domestic spending in any budget deal.

These are not partisan Democratic priorities. If one were to put each of these priorities up for a vote, they would all pass with bipartisan support in the House and the Senate. In fact, we could have passed each of these bills a long time ago. Yet, instead of doing something that would actually help people, the Republicans spent months working as hard as they could behind closed doors to give the wealthiest 1 percent of the people in our country and corporations huge tax cuts. Now they are trying to convince the other 99 percent of the American public that this tax bill was a good deal for them, but that is another story and is another example of misplaced priorities.

In getting back to the matter at hand, which is the urgency of preventing a government shutdown, the House is trying to pass another short-term spending bill that only includes a reauthorization for children's health and not the other important priorities we need to support. The Republicans in Congress are trying to pit communities, children, families, and Dreamers against one another in an attempt to divide and conquer. They are hoping we will support yet another government funding bill that kicks the can down the road because they will have funded children's health, even as, in their bill, they abandon the Dreamers and the rural communities that depend on community health centers.

We cannot allow this cynical Republican ploy to succeed. We need to keep fighting for children's health, for community health centers, for Dreamers, and for parity. I will not vote for any government funding bill that does not include all four of these important and urgent priorities. We cannot leave anyone behind because it is clear Donald

Trump will not keep his promise to protect those we call the DACA kids.

I was at the White House last week when the President looked us in the eye and said on national TV that he would sign a bipartisan compromise on the Dreamers. He barely waited for us to leave the White House before reneging on that promise. Then we all know what happened last week during the meeting with Senators DURBIN and GRAHAM at the White House when he was presented with a bipartisan compromise.

We cannot let the President's irresponsible behavior stop us from fighting for Dreamers who deserve our support and protection. Dreamers like Getsi from Beaverton, OR, whom I met late last month when she traveled to Washington, DC, to fight for the passage of the Dream Act. Getsi's parents brought her to Oregon from Mexico when she was only 4 years old. The journey was long and hard, and Getsi's sister was left behind.

While growing up, Getsi's parents warned her not to talk about her immigration status because even mentioning it to the wrong person could result in their deportations. She lived in constant fear. While growing up, Getsi's parents always emphasized the importance of her obtaining a higher education, and while her mom and dad only completed the 5th and 12th grades, respectively, they instilled a love of learning in their daughter and a deep desire to go to college.

After working hard in high school, Getsi enrolled in Western Oregon University, where she is studying to become a gerontological nurse. Getsi works incredibly hard. She is taking 20 credits a semester. I remember, when I was in college, 15 credits was a lot. She is taking 20 credits a semester, is working full time at an assisted living facility, and has recently become a certified rock climbing instructor. Getsi is scheduled to graduate a year early, in May, from Western Oregon University. After graduation, she is planning to enroll in an accelerated nursing master's program so she can realize her dream of becoming a gerontological nurse practitioner.

When I asked what inspired her to pursue such a selfless career, Getsi talked about wanting to care for people like her grandmother back in Mexico and for her parents as they got older. Without the protections DACA provides, Getsi will lose her work authorization, and if she is not able to work, she will not be able to pay for school and will be unable to pursue her dreams.

When I asked her why she traveled for days to come to Washington to share this message with Congress, her response was very moving. She said:

I have so many dreams and aspirations, and I urge people here to understand how much these Dreamers have to give to the U.S. We were brought at such a young age, we don't know anything about our homelands. I want to be able to stay in the U.S.,

to stay with my friends and family—my nieces and nephew—everyone who is looking up to me. I want to prove that my parents' sacrifice meant something.

This is a pivotal moment for Congress. Are we going to do more than pay lip service to Dreamers like Getsi by doing our jobs to protect them and provide healthcare to millions of children and families across the country or are we going to bend to the whims of an unpredictable, mercurial, and unreliable President?

Rather than waiting for the President to make up his mind, I call on the majority leader to recognize that as a separate branch of government, Congress should be a check on the excesses of the executive branch. It is about time the majority leader and Republicans in Congress stepped up to do their jobs.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, most people who are watching TV or who are watching C-SPAN know we are at a very important place here. We are in a position wherein, at midnight tomorrow night, if Congress doesn't act, we will shut down the government. What does shutting down the government mean? It means a lot of things.

It means there are going to be a number of employees who will be wondering when they will get their next paychecks or whether they will get repaid, depending upon whether we make a decision to pay them for time worked.

It means people who need desperately needed services may be wondering whether they will be able to get those services, and—if, for no other reason, even if the money is there—is the distraction going to slow down badly needed services to a number of people who rely on the Federal Government as their safety net?

It is going to mean our military will wonder whether America will really be behind them anymore because the games we are playing in the Senate are more important than the work they are doing to protect the Nation and to protect our allies. It is going to mean a lot of very negative things that should be avoided. I am going to talk a little bit about it.

What I first want to do is to summarize what we are trying to do—people like me who are going to support the continuing resolution. Now, to be honest with you, I hate the whole continuing resolution process.

When I was younger, there was a time when our family was struggling. My father was doing construction work, and he literally had to borrow money to pay for the materials he

needed to actually do the job so that he could pay the bills for the family. The way he did that and the way you still do it today, in struggling families, is that you get these 90-day notes. You go to a banker, you tell them you have a project to work on, and you prove to them that you can pay the money back in 90 days and then you pay them back.

Well, that is how we are running the business of the most important Nation that has ever existed. A 1-month CR, a 3-month CR, or a 12-month CR is not the way you run the greatest Nation on the face of the planet. It has a number of problems with it, not the least of which is that you can't give the military any certainty to know what they can invest in for the next new generation weapon or defense system, because they simply don't know if the money will be there for them to make that investment. It means that we are getting far less production for our dollar, we are inefficient, and we are sending a message to the world that we are not serious about the long-term investment that we need to make for our safety and security.

It also affects a number of other agencies, but I think this is very important in these times with all the heightened threats across the world. If we send a message that we are not here for the long term and we are not willing to make those long-term investments, that is a bad message to send. That is the problem with CRs versus what we call regular order—to sit down, negotiate appropriations, pass appropriations bills, and give the men and women in uniform, give the government employees, and give the people who rely on our safety net some certainty. That is our job.

That is why I support a bill that Senator HELLER is proposing. It is called the No Budget, No Pay Act. I think the Senate Members and the Members of the House should not get a paycheck when they fail to do their job. Doing their job means they pass appropriations bills, they pass a budget, and they actually do the job they swore they would do if they won a race for the Senate or the Congress. I hope that bill gets a debate on the floor. I look forward to supporting it when it does.

Let's go back to the CR. The CR is simple. It is 4 weeks long. All it really does is to make sure that we have funding for our servicemembers. It makes sure we have funding for our veterans. It makes sure we have funding for the CHIP program. It actually authorizes it for several years. It gives certainty to States and to people who need support that it is going to be there. It also provides funding for small business loans and funding for the National Institutes of Health. It does a number of other things, but those are critically important.

We have some Members who are trying to negotiate a deal for the DACA population. DACA is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. It is a program that President Obama put into

place in 2012. It is actually something that I have been working on since we filed the bill in August—and long before that—to try to get reasonably minded Members on both sides of the aisle to come up with a solution that makes sense. But now we have people who actually want to shut down the government because we haven't reached a bipartisan agreement that I think is not that far away. The problem that I have with that is that I think it is going to create a toxic environment in Washington, DC, that is not only going to provide all the uncertainty that I talked about on the prior slide, but it is even going to alienate people who are coming to the table trying to negotiate a bipartisan agreement. Now we are at a point where we are trying to figure out if we can fund the government either through a vote sometime tomorrow or if there will be a shutdown tomorrow night.

I have only been here for about 3 years, and I have been in politics for 12 years. I find it interesting how things change overnight, how things that were untenable or awful just a couple of months or a couple of years ago are justified today based on the disagreement we have on the DACA deal, which I am convinced we will get done before the March 5 deadline, and I hope sooner than that because there are a lot of good kids who came to this Nation through no fault of their own, through a decision made by an adult, who deserve a path to citizenship, who deserve the respect of this Nation, and who should be welcome because there are a lot of good kids.

I will keep working on a solution, but now we have people who want to distract us, not only to distract us from trying to negotiate a reasonable outcome for DACA but adding the distraction and creating the toxic environment that shutting down the government will cause.

If we go back, what is amazing to me is that the very people who are now saying we should shut down the government made these kind of statements in the past. This is from former Speaker PELOSI in the House: "Not too long ago it was an unthinkable tactic to use in a political debate."

There is a long list of people.

Senator NELSON: "You don't hold the country hostage."

But that is exactly what they are proposing today.

Senator KING: "... the constant hostage-taking situation to get something in that process that you couldn't get through the normal process."

It is a hard quote to read, but the point is that now they want to take hostages. Now they want to do exactly what they thought, not long ago, was inappropriate, unkind, unfair, and uncompassionate.

Then we have Senator HEITKAMP: "It is really bullying behavior when the small minority does this."

I think it will be a minority that will oppose funding the government. So

now people who didn't like the bullying behavior are trying to rationalize that somehow that it is OK.

The other issue we have here is that we have been getting close on a funding discussion, and we have been getting close on DACA. I don't know. I can't speak to you all directly, but if I were speaking to the pages, I would ask them whether or not they saw the "Peanuts" cartoon. There is a common theme that we talk about with Lucy and the football. The scene is where you are running down the field and you are about to kick the football, and just at about the time that you are going to do it, there is a group of people who want to pull the football away. That is what they are doing again.

Honestly, it gets tiring to see us come so close, to have so many reasonably minded people. Guess what. There are unreasonable people. It is a bipartisan situation we have here. I have friends. They are friends of mine, but on certain issues they become unreasonable. They are not part of the solution. All of a sudden they create these coalitions, and they are the Lucy taking away the football from those of us who actually want to score, want to make progress, want to fund the Government, and want to provide a solution for the DACA population. Now we have another Lucy and the football scenario on both the spending bill and also the DACA bill.

I also have to talk about the CHIP program. The CHIP program is something I wanted to reauthorize in September of last year. September of last year was the month before the program technically expired. However, there was sufficient money in reserves for the States to continue to run the programs. Those States are starting to run out of money, including States like mine, North Carolina. Now we have an opportunity to reauthorize for years, to provide certainty to this child population for years, and we are going to hold it hostage because we have an honest disagreement over things I think we can work out with the DACA Program.

We have seen what people have said in the past. In fact, one of these Senators actually had a countdown on how many days we failed to reauthorize DACA. It may very well be that when we take the vote tonight, that very same Senator will vote against a multiyear reauthorization for the CHIP program. That doesn't make sense. It is irrational. It doesn't solve anything. It creates a bigger problem when it comes to the funding discussion and when it ultimately comes to a reasonable outcome for the DACA population.

Finally, we can talk about the words of the Democratic leader. Again, it is amazing to me how things have changed.

So did you believe what you were saying then? Or is who we see now and what position you are taking now who you really are? People need to come to the floor and let me know. Is this what

you meant or is your new position what you meant? You can't have it both ways. In politics, people try to, but you need to say something and stick with it. They need to defend which is their real position. If those are their positions in the past, let's pass the spending bill, let's work hard to get DACA done, and let's stop this theater that is not helping anybody. All this is doing is making people who work and rely on government funding worry, and it is making people who rely on government funding and the DACA population even more worried. Every day they think they are 1 day closer to having an illegal status here.

We see speeches on the floor about the Dreamers, the people who are doing well. Most of them are going to school, working, or serving in the military. I believe every single one of them. There are tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of more examples. That is why I am so motivated to come up with a solution. That is why I am so frustrated with those playing these games when we are so close.

So let's talk about DACA. There is the so-called gang that is putting together a bill. Let me back up and talk about a meeting that I attended in the White House last Tuesday. In the prior meeting I attended the previous Thursday, Republicans met with the President. We said: Mr. President, the way for us to get to a solution is to call Democrats and Republicans into a room, Members of the House and Senate, have us air our differences and then agree to a timeline for negotiating a deal that we can bring to the American people and solve this problem.

The President responded by calling a meeting on that Tuesday. Some people may have seen it. There was about 50 minutes of press coverage. Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, who just came in here, was a part of that meeting. We all felt great about it. We aired our differences. We knew there were differences we needed to bridge. We agreed to four different pillars that we would use as a basis for negotiation. Come up with something that the DACA population needs, something compassionate—something very similar or maybe something between the bill that Senator LANKFORD, Senator HATCH, and I proposed, the SUCCEED Act and the Dream Act—and bridge the differences. We were making progress. We also knew that we had to deal with things like the diversity lottery, border security, and what some of our colleagues call family reunification, which has been abused and needs to be fixed. Others call it chain migration.

At the end of that meeting, we agreed that what we needed to do was to have the leaders, the whips of the House and the Senate—the Democrats and the Republicans—agree to a timeline and a schedule and then get together and work out our differences. I, for one, think those meetings should

be open to the public because then the public would realize, I think, that we are not that far apart. Unfortunately, we are a week and a half later, and the parties have not even reached an agreement on a schedule to begin the negotiations. Now we have another group of people that say: We have something that is pretty close and we may file a bill, or you need to get on to the bill.

Let me tell you the problem I have with that bill or the concept of the bill. No. 1, has it been introduced? No. So it is "thoughtware." None of us can talk about the specific provisions because we don't have something we can score, look at, or understand the benefits and risks and issues associated with it and whether or not we can get the votes.

The question is, Does the bill have the support of the President? Well, I think you saw what was vetted on Thursday, which was not a specific provision, and that meeting last week didn't go too well on several different levels. We don't have an agreement.

The other question is, if you don't have an agreement with the President, you have to understand the process of the Congress. If the President were to veto the bill, and we are struggling to get 60 votes, now we would have to get 67 votes. Does anybody here honestly believe we will get 67 votes to withstand a veto override? So we have to get back to this one, to get the President behind it, because that is not going to happen. Even if that could happen, then we have to go to the House. It is not about a simple majority of the House Members. We have to think about a supermajority of House Members that would override a Presidential veto. Right now, based on the number of Members who are in the House—there are a couple of open seats—that is 288 votes. That isn't going to happen. That is not a very good scorecard. It is not a recipe for success.

I am one of the ones who want checked boxes next to a bill that the President supports, that the Senate will get 60 votes on, and the House will get more than half, so that we can solve the problem for the DACA population.

Things happen quickly here, and, hopefully, this is another example where they will. I hope my Republican colleagues recognize that voting against the funding bill is a bad idea. How do you work out of a shutdown? Almost certainly it will not end well. So I hope my Republican colleagues will vote for the spending bill, and I hope a majority or a good number of my Democratic colleagues will, so that we get the spending issue off the table. Then I hope that same group of people will come together and recognize that the gaps are not that hard to bridge for the DACA solution, that the border security measures are reasonable, that the changes in the elimination of the diversity lottery and a more reasonable way to allow merit-based immigration makes sense. We can deal with under-

represented countries to make absolutely certain that good hard-working people in those countries who want to come and live and work in America can do it. This is not a difficult thing to do.

It is almost as if people are going in the backroom trying to figure out how to make this more difficult than it needs to be.

I am telling and imploring the Members of the Senate, whether you are Republican or Democrat, vote for funding the Government. Vote for our soldiers. Vote for our veterans. Vote for the children who require these programs who are desperately in need of certainty. Then, quickly, get on DACA and vote for the Dreamers who need our support. Vote for border security so we can know who is coming across this border and we can make the Nation safer. These are commonsense, rational, and reasonable expectations, and if we lower the temperature here, if we treat people with respect, and if we actually not let the polar opposites impact what those of us in the center want to do, then we can avoid this crisis and we can do great things for millions of people.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before I speak—because Senator PERDUE wants to speak right after me—I ask unanimous consent that Senator PERDUE, assuming he shows up before I am done, be the next one in line to follow me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DACA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to offer remarks about an issue of utmost important to this body and to the American people—the ongoing negotiations over the future of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA.

I should explain the justification for these young people. The children were brought here by their parents. Their parents crossed the border without papers, violating the law, but the children cannot be held guilty for the sins of their parents. That is why we feel it is very legitimate to do this humanitarian thing of legalizing DACA children—not in and of itself, but, as you heard from my colleague from North Carolina and you will hear from other people, the necessity of making sure that we have border security, that we do away with chain migration, and that we also do away with diversity visas—this is the scope of negotiations that ought to be going on to get a compromise for the humanitarian reason of giving certainty to these young DACA people.

Those things were narrowed at the White House a week ago Tuesday, not the famous Thursday meeting that you heard so much about last weekend but

the meeting of 23 Republican and Democrat Members of both the House and Senate. When you get a bicameral, bipartisan group of people together with the President—and you want to do that because you want to make sure that when you reach an agreement, the President will sign it—it seems to me that is a significant way to move forward. But things tend to take different routes around here, and I am here because of some routes that I think are very puzzling at this point—pretty much along the lines of what the Senator from North Carolina just stated.

Last week, speaking to my colleagues, I told this body that we still weren't any closer to a legitimate and fair deal that promotes and protects the interests of the American people in a lawful immigration system, and, at the same time, what is very important is providing a fair and equitable solution on DACA. But we also want to take care of the interests of the American people, particularly the safety of the American people when it comes to criminal aliens.

Since I made that speech a week ago, we made some progress in a meeting that went on at the White House, which I just told you about. In spite of the many events of these past 2 weeks, the pronouncement I just made that we don't have a legitimate, fair deal on one hand to protect the American people and, on the other hand, to deliver the humanitarian ends that we need for the DACA kids—that pronouncement still holds true.

Unfortunately, immigration has become the "Groundhog Day" of the U.S. Senate. Democrats, and even some Republicans, keep repeating the same mistakes that we have been making for the past 30 years, and they don't seem to be learning from them. I should probably tell my colleagues what I have learned in those 30 years.

Thirty years ago, when I voted for an immigration bill—the last great big reform of immigration—we had 3 million undocumented people here. In good faith, we thought we had secured the border because throughout the history of the country, from the beginning, it had never been illegal to hire an illegal alien, and for the first time, we made it illegal for our employers to hire someone who is undocumented, taking away the magnet to come to this country. We thought it would secure the border if they couldn't be legally hired, and we legalized 3 million people. We didn't take into consideration the whole industry of false documents in which, if I go to an employer and show him a false document and they believe it is a true document, then they are not guilty of hiring me, even though I am technically an undocumented worker, because I am using a fraudulent document.

What happens when you reward illegality? You get more of it. So instead of the 3 million people we had legalized, we now have an 11-million person issue. That is what I have been told.